

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a system for remotely monitoring networked devices and appliances, email messages are sent across networks, the email messages containing configuration, status or other information. For flexibility, it is desirable to quickly and easily change the message type designation, and to easily determine a data structure definition based on the received message type. To achieve this goal, the message type designation of a given message's information may be defined within the message itself, and extracted at the receiving end before the information is analyzed or stored according to the data structure definition. Thus, a large number of devices is allowed to communicate configuration, status and/or other types of information in a variety of message types. A method is provided for receiving information concerning a remotely monitored device, the information being contained in a message that also includes a message type designation. The method involves parsing a line from the message to extract the message type designation, determining a data structure definition based on the message type designation, reading data elements from the other lines, and inserting the data elements according to the data structure definition. The method may be implemented in object-oriented programming, in a software module including a data retriever class, an email processor class, and a parser class.